



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

STUDENT ESSAY

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THE US DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA FOR THE COMING DECADE

BY

GREGORY L. JOHNSON

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economy meant economic and political opportunities for the U.S. in China. China has begun to experiment with capitalism and is continuing to grow stronger in both tactical and strategic nuclear weapons capability. The PRC is attempting to acquire military technology from any source, using any means it has at its disposal. While there are, no doubt, many advantages to both sides in this new relationship, the U.S. needs to be wary that it not be duped into giving up more than it can ever hope to obtain in return from the relationship. Recent developments in nuclear cooperation between the U.S. and PRC are worrisome because of their implications for the possible spread of nuclear capability to Third World countries. The U.S. should continue to encourage the reform in China brought about by Premier Deng Xiaoping, but caution is advised. There is no need to hurry.

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

THE U.S. DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA FOR THE COMING DECADE

INDIVIDUAL ESSSAY

bу

Gregory L. Johnson

Colonel Neil Hock, MI Project Advisor

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US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

1 April 1986

ABSTRACT

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The United States was shocked by the political successes of communism in the post-World War II world. Europe had been divided into two camps, the Chinese mainland was taken by Mao-zedong and the Chinese communists, and Korea was also divided between a communist regime in the north and a democracy in the south. The U.S. reaction was to attempt to isolate the People's Republic of China, but after twenty years, both the PRC and the U.S. found that mutual interests were bringing them closer together. The Soviet Union was viewed as a common enemy in some respects, and the PRC's desire to modernize its military and economy meant economic and political opportunities for the U.S. in China. China has begun to experiment with capitalism and is continuing to grow stronger in both tactical and strategic nuclear weapons capability. The PRC is attempting to acquire military technology from any source, using any means it has at its disposal. While there are, no doubt, many advantages to both sides in this new relationship, the U.S. needs to be wary that it not be duped into giving up m, ore than it can ever hope to obtain in reteurn from the relationship. Recent developments in nuclear cooperation between the U.S. and PRC are worrisome because of their implications for the possible spread of nuclear capability to Third World countries. The U.S. should continue to encourage the reform in China brought about by Premier Deng Xio-ping, but caution is advised. There is no need to hurry.

I. HISTORY OF THE US/PRC RELATIONSHIP

In 1949 Mao Zedong and the Chinese communists assumed power in the PRC after a long struggle to overthrow the Chiang Kai-shek regime. Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Party followers fled to Formosa and established themselves as the ruling government there. The United States government refused to formally recognize the newly formed People's Republic of China on the mainland and instead continued diplomatic relations with the Nationalist Chinese of Taiwan. The US and Taiwan became even closer aligned as economic and military assistance from America increased tremendously in the period following the collapse of the Chiang Kai-shek government on the mainland.

It seemed that the United States was shocked by the stunning successes of communism in the post-World War II world. At that time, the West had been repulsed and angered by the territorial aggrandizement of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and tensions between East and West grew enormously as the Cold War era began in earnest. The fall of the Chiang Kai-shek government was the last straw in US eyes, and the US government became more determined than ever that the "red menace" had to be stopped. A wave of fervent anti-communism swept through America and ushered in the McCarthy era.

Blame for the "loss of China" was debated back and forth, and a genuine fear of the threat of communism took control. This is understandable considering the fact that China was the first major country to fall to communism in over thirty years since the 1917 revolution in Russia. Before this, most Americans had not considered communism a serious threat to democracy or the existing world order. To make matters worse, the spread of communism seemed to continue further in Korea as the PRC entered the war there in the early 1950's. This only served to harden the US government toward the PRC even more.

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For the next 20 years (roughly from 1949 to 1969), the US government attempted to ignore and isolate the communist Chinese in every way possible. In the eyes of the United States, the only true and legitimate government of all of China was that of the displaced Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist followers. The hope was kept alive that one day Chiang Kai-shek would succeed in his efforts to overthrow the Mainland communists and restore himself in power in Peking. The futility of this dream did not become apparent for many years to come.

Finally, after 20-plus years of ignoring the People's Republic of China, the United States began to take steps toward warming its relations with the "Giant of the East." President Nixon indicated a willingness as early as 1969 to establish closer ties with China. Henry Kissinger began a series of visits to Beijing in 1971 and President Nixon himself visited Beijing in 1972. These visits culm, inated with the signing of the Shanghai Communique by President Nixon. The opening of liaison offices in Washington, DC and Beijing followed in 1972.

Movement along these lines came almost to a complete halt, however, as President Nixon came under political fire over Watergate, and Mao Zedong and Zhou En-lai began to be criticized by their rivals in China. Relations cooled even further when the Chinese stood by in dismay as the US appeared to warm up to the Soviet Union with the SALT I agreement, the Vladivostok Agreement of December 1974, grain sales and technology transfers to the USSR, and the Helsinki Accords of 1975.

Other significant events in this period were: the visit to Beijing of President Ford in December 1975, Zhou En-lai's death in January 1976, the Cultural Revolution and the ascendancy of the ideologists in the PRC, and the death of Mao in 1976. In early 1978, the President's National Security

Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, visited Beijing, and in 1978, President Carter decided to permit the sale of "dual purpose technology" to China on a case-by-case basis. Finally, the US and the PRC formally established diplomatic relations on January 1, 1979. A trade agreement was signed on July 2, 1979, and on October 23, 1979, President Carter approved Most-favored Nation status for the PRC. Vice-President Mondale visited the PRC in August 1979 and officially opened a US Consulate-General in Guang Zhou (Canton). Secretary of Defense Harold Brown visited the PRC in January 1980 and in May, it was announced that the US would permit the PRC to purchase air defense radar, helicopters, and transport planes. Further, the US would authorize American companies to construct helicopter and electronics factories in China.

After normalization of relations, the next frenzied two years saw 35 treaties, agreements, and protocols signed between US and PRC government agencies. In the last five years, trade between the two countries has jumped enormously, and US business investment in China has spiralled upwards as China has apparently begun to experiment with capitalism. Clearly, this is one of the most remarkable turnabouts on the part of the US government in US diplomatic history. From friend to foe, and again towards friendship, has been the pattern and this opens the question of why this has occurred, and whether or not it is beneficial for the two parties.

II. BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES OF A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP

Traditional diplomatic efforts were undertaken to achieve closer relations between the US and PRC and a close examination shows that the interests and objectives of the two great powers were a mixture of political, economic, and military. It was to both sides' advantage to

create a strong China to offset the growing influence of the Soviet Union in Asia, and each recognized that the key was in reviving China's stagnant economy. To get its foot in the door, the US offered, and the PRC welcomed, economic investment, expanded trade, and technological assistance.

In the late sixties, the Chinese believed that closer ties with the US would offer them a counterweight against the USSR. The Soviets had already demonstrated expansionist tendencies in Asia, and especially in Indochina. The Soviets had also beefed up their military forces along the Chinese border, including adding strength in Mongolia.

The PRC also desired a return to Chinese control of Taiwan. establishment of diplomatic relations with the US would mean that the US would eventually most likely sever its ties with Taiwan and remove US military forces from the islands. If tensions could be reduced with the US, China could then concentrate more on its northern and southern borders, and not concern itself as much with Taiwan in its defense planning. Also, the Chinese could, through accelerated economic development with the assistance of the West, begin to make use of its almost \$19 billion in foreign currency reserves which it had accumulated. China would become modernized and, through economic strength, become a more formidable power in regional affairs. Other spin-offs would be acceptance by the world community and a seat in the United Nations. The PRC also hoped that the creation of its Four Special Economic Zones, which are run in the capitalist mode, would allay fears among westerners of changes in the economic systems of Hong Kong and Taiwan once these return to PRC control. The idea would be to permit Hong Kong and Taiwan to maintain their capitalist systems and become Special Economic Zones in themselves.

What About the US Side?

From the US perspective, the benefits of closer ties with the PRC were also far-reaching. There is some evidence to point to the fact that, in the late sixties and early seventies, President Nixon believed that a China connection would facilitate settlement of the Vietnam war. A strong China could produce competition between the USSR and the PRC for influence in South and Northeast Asia, and possibly other parts of the world such as Africa. Stability could be brought to trouble areas such as the Indo-Pakistan border and the Korean peninsula. If the US were to back off gradually from its "two Chinas" "proach, perhaps the PRC would cease its calls for the dissolution of the Japanese-American defense treaty as a quid pro quo. A stable Asian continent could permit the US to devote more attention to sustaining its military presence in the Persian Gulf. Then resources could be concentrated in those areas where the Soviet threat was greatest.

Also, moving closer to the Chinese might force the Soviets to be more forthcoming with the US in negotiations on bi-lateral issues such as arms control. A strong China offered the West the opportunity to play the PRC and USSR off against one another. Delaying recognition of China could force the Chinese to turn to the USSR for assistance.

Then there are the economic benefits to be derived by the US through trade and investment. Close economic ties would provide the US the opportunity to influence the direction of the Chinese domestic economic system (and by extrapolation, the domestic political scene as well). What could be more tempting to the US than a chance to introduce capitalism to the largest communist power on the face of the earth? Also, the possibility

that the Chinese market of one billion people might be opened to Western business was just too good an opportunity to pass up.

What About the Linkage Between Politics and Trade?

In the last five years, the US has exported over \$14 billion worth of goods to China, compared with less than \$2 billion for the five-year period before that. Total US-China trade in 1974 was only \$934 million. Chinese exports of manufactured goods have zoomed from \$3.6 billion in 1978 to \$12.7 billion in 1983, and roughly \$15 billion last year. China claims that direct investment by Western nations in China's four Special Economic Zones over the past five years has totaled some \$3 billion. Most of the cash money committed so far has come from 27 oil companies exploring in the South China Sea. Other American companies which have taken the plunge so far include R. J. Reynolds, American Motors, Gillette, Foxboro Corporation, McDonnell Douglas, 3M, IBM, Boeing, and United Technologies.

Have the PRC and the US Achieved Their Goals?

From the Chinese perspective, border tensions with the USSR have abated although it would be difficult to tie this fact to the US connection. The Soviets have continued to press in their Afghanistan adventure. The Reagan administration has been slow to follow through on President Carter's assurances to the PRC that the "Taiwan issue" is a matter to be resolved by the Chinese themselves. Limited quantities of American military equipment as "replacement parts" continue to be supplied to the Taiwan government, and the two sides still maintain coordination-type offices in the respective capitals. The PRC has been seated in the UN and they have established diplomatic ties with a large number of other nations. The British government has had to face up to the eventual reversion of Hong Kong to

Chinese control, and a formal date has been set for this to occur 14 years from now.

As described elsewhere in this essay, China's new Special Economic Zones are attracting a significant amount of foreign investment from the West and trade is spiralling upwards. However, trade between the US and PRC in 1984 was only one-third of trade with Taiwan which only has a population of 19 million. Hong Kong Chinese have, thus far, provided about 90 percent of the actual investments made, and there is some indication that the tough terms dictated by the PRC up to this point have caused some foreign investors to remain in a wait-and-see mode. Progress has been slower than desired, but the Chinese hope to obtain an additional \$7 billion in investment during the next 12 months. China has diluted the attraction of its cheap land and labor by refusing thus far to open its domestic market to foreign goods, with few exceptions. There have also been problems such as corruption, black marketing, rapid money supply growth, lax credit controls, and arbitrary price increases. The state issued \$2.8 billion more in currency last year than usual, and the national payroll swelled at a 46 percent annual rate in the fourth quarter. The budget deficit was 67 percent higher than expected, and foreign exchange reserves fell by some 12 percent to \$14.4 billion, partly because of unchecked imports of such luxury goods as color TV's and cars. In 1984 China's Gross National Product (GNP) exceeded \$455 billion (US dollars), with an increase of 13 percent over the previous year. Industrial and agricultural output amounted to about \$400 billion (US dollars), showing a growth of more than 14 percent and national income went up by 12 percent. This is significant progress, but the level of development is still low in comparison with that of many other countries.

At present, China's GNP per capita is only \$450 (US dollars), and this places China in the group of low-income countries.²

How About the US?

Clearly, the hope that China might make a positive difference with regard to the Vietnam war did not materialize. It can be argued, however, that a measure of stability has returned to most areas of North and South Asia, with minor exceptions. An intermittent dialogue between the US and USSR on arms control has continued, but nothing conclusive has, as yet, been achieved. A definite difference in philosophy has emerged between the USSR and the PRC, though, in the area of ideology. China still has a state-owned economy and is by no means "going capitalist," but since Deng Xiao-ping assumed command, China has moved quickly toward his goal of a profit-oriented, market-focused, consumer society. Also, unlike the leaders who were molded in the tradition of the late Chairman Mao Zedung to be "more red than expert," it appears that Premier Deng is attempting to leave a legacy of new leaders who will be "more expert than red." The Communist Party newspaper has, in fact, declared Karl Marx irrelevant to much of what is going on in China today.

It would seem, then, that there have been both good and bad spin-offs from the rapprochement between the PRC and the US and, although neither side has gained all that it desired from the relationship, positive results have been achieved by both. The potential for the future is for even greater breakthroughs.

III. PRC DEFENSE

What About the Status of the PRC's Defense and How Does it Fit Into This Picture?

The PRC became quite concerned with matters of defense around the time of the Korean war. Soviet military assistance missions were established shortly after the Korean armistice in 1953. In the 1958-59 time period, various programs were initiated to develop nuclear hardware and surface-to-surface ballistic missiles based largely upon Soviet design and production techniques. The US military presence in Vietnam in the 1960's; the menace of Soviet troops positioning themselves along the PRC/USSR border in 1965; and the clash between Soviet and Chinese troops on the Ussuri River in 1969 reinforced the feeling in the PRC that a large scale modernization of its armed forces was long overdue.

The PRC became increasingly worried about becoming encircled by the two superpowers and their East Asian allies. This was, in large part, the stimulus for the PRC to embark upon a serious program for the development of strategic nuclear weapons.

On October 16, 1964, an atomic device was detonated in the PRC and it, thereby, became the fifth member of the world's nuclear club. This was followed in 1967 by the detonation of a hydrogen device. The development of nuclear warheads and medium range ballistic missiles (MRBM) was to be the next step. A medium range ballistic missile with a nuclear warhead was successfully tested on October 27, 1966. These MRBM's were identified as CSS-1's and they were later deployed in limited numbers to launch sites in Zinjiang (northwest) and Shenyang (northeast) military districts. Targets in the eastern portions of the USSR and a few other neighboring countries could easily be reached by these missiles. In 1972 an intermediate range

ballistic missile (IRBM) with an increased range was successfully tested. The next few years saw the PRC concentrate on production of quantities of MRBM's and IRBM's but, beginning in 1967-77, the PRC switched its emphasis to development and production of full range inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBM). By 1977 the PRC had operationally tested an ICBM. In that year, work also commenced on production of a medium range jet bomber for nuclear weapon delivery; seven artificial satellites had been placed into earth orbit; and work had begun on a platform to be used for tests of submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM).

In 1975, at the Fourth National People's Congress, Zhou En-lai announced the beginning of a "comprehensive modernization of national defense." More satellites, primarily with photographic and reconnaissance functions, were launched using rockets which demonstrated improved sophistication in guidance technology. Also, 10 to 20 limited range ICBM's and 4 to 8 full-range ICBM's were added to the PRC's arsenal of approximately 50 to 100 MRBM's and IRBM's. The addition of these longer range missiles increased the vulnerability of Soviet industrial and military centers throughout the USSR to PRC attack. It also meant that the FRC missiles would no longer have to be deployed in areas close to the USSR border which had left earlier configurations within fairly easy striking distance of the Soviets.

China reconfirmed its commitment to the development of strategic nuclear weapons a few years later with the adoption of its "Four Modernizations" program. Improvement in science and technology became paramount of the four modernizations (the other three being agriculture, industry, and national defense). Although the PRC's leaders gave lowest priority to "military modernization," they made no secret of the fact that strategic nuclear weapons held the same high national priority as they had since the 1960's.

This reassertion of priorities involved the following shifts in emphasis:

- -- from basic to applied research;
- -- from discovery to dissemination of results;
- -- from work on new technologies to research on improving and applying known methods and retro-fitting existing facilities;
- -- from prestigious, high-visibility projects, to activities with immediate economic pay-offs;
- -- from across-the-board acquisitions of advanced foreign technologies to selective importation of technologies (and equipment) needed to fill immediate economic needs but impossible to develop quickly or cheaply in China. 4

Since the late seventies, there has also occurred a significant transformation in the country's military system. At the time of Mao Zedong's death in 1976, the People's Liberation Army was the world's largest armed force at a strength of 4.75 million. When Deng Xiaping became head of the Central Military Commission in June 1981, he initiated several reforms in the military. He announced his intention to reduce the military by one million persons; to increase the literary and technical skills of the soldiers; to lower the average age of the officer's corps; to revamp training methods; and to rethink China's legacy from Mao of following a "people's war" (conventional guerrilla-type war) as the only strategic doctrine. He also began an anti-corruption drive.

In September 1981 a series of combined arms exercises were begun, some including simulating the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Naval exercises were held during this period involving large task forces of ships voyaging far into the South Pacific Ocean. All in all, great progress was made in improving organization, coordination, and weapons. In 1980 China

successfully tested an ICBM with a range of 7,000 nautical miles, and in 1982 the PRC tested its first submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) from a Golf-class diesel-powered submarine in the East China Sea. In April 1984 China also launched its first geosynchronous satellite propelled by a three-stage launcher with a sophisticated guidance system. The PRC is also developing a new aircraft, the variable-wing J-8 which is based on the Soviet MIG-23.

One of the most important naval developments was the development of the Zia Strategic missile submarine sometime in 1981. It is believed to carry an IRBM with a range of 1,800 nautical miles. Currently there are no more than two Xia submarines which are operational, but this strategic missile submarine capability is only shared by the US, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France. Sea trials of a Han-class nuclear-powered submarine are reportedly underway. This submarine reportedly can carry up to 12 SLBM's and there are reports that four more such submarines are under construction. The Han-class submarine can remain submerged indefinitely and would be able to operate under Arctic waters.

China's current nuclear forces provide a "minimum deterrent." Their missiles are all liquid-fueled and most are deployed close to China's northern and western borders in caves or concrete silos. The Chinese are now working towards development of solid fuel for heavy missiles. In September 1981, a single CSS-X-4 booster orbited three experimental space satellites which indicates that multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicle (MIRV) development is also progressing.

What Problems Does the PRC Face in Improvement of its Defense Capability?

One difficulty the Chinese have brought upon themselves is caused by the government's commitment to self-sufficiency in production. In the late

seventies when a number of Chinese delegations visited Western nations to "shop" for weapons systems they were only interested in licensed production and not outright purchase. There were other reasons for this as well. For instance, the Chinese believed it would be cheaper in the long run to produce their own weapons; it would lessen dependence upon foreign governments; and production at home would aid in closing the "technology gap" which has existed between the PRC and the West in this important area. The Chinese have steadily made incremental improvements in their weapons technology by copying or imitating existing systems from other countries. They have continued to import "gray area" technology that is applicable to both civilian and military purposes, including advanced electronics and modern metallurgical technologies. They have purchased a few air traffic control radars, simulators, and computers as well. All of these can be applied to civilian needs, but can also enhance military capabilities such as anti-submarine warfare, marine navigation, communications, and target acquisition. All of this provides immediate improvement in operations while helping at the same time to train a new generation of technicians.

The Chinese also continue the practice of "backward engineering," despite its proven drawbacks. For example, during the 1960's, the Chinese used an actual Soviet MIG-21 Fishbed fighter to derive blueprints and specifications and finally were able to reproduce a clone of this particular aircraft. They did the same with the Soviet TU-6 Badger bomber. The resulting aircraft in both cases were not fully successful because the Chinese were unable at the time to duplicate Soviet electronics and metallurgy. One way in which the Chinese have been able to obtain modern Soviet military technology is by trading with Egypt. The Chinese have acquired samples of the swing-wing MIG-23 Flogger-E fighter from Egypt in

exchange for Chinese aircraft and spare parts. Pirating sophisticated technology in this manner is not cost effective since it requires an inordinate amount of time and manpower. Less sophisticated items can be successfully copied, however, as the Chinese have demonstrated with their pirated versions of Soviet transport aircraft and helicopters.

Another problem is that the Chinese early-warning radar system has huge gaps at medium and high altitudes, and the coverage at low altitudes is totally inadequate. Surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns are deployed to protect major industrial and political centers, but the radar and missiles are vulnerable to Soviet electronic countermeasures (ECM). This means that, in reality, China's cities have little in the way of reliable or effective defense.

Although the PLA air force and PLA naval air force together comprise approximately 4,600 fighter-interceptors, few have even limited night/foul weather intercept capability and are, therefore, only effective in daylight and fair weather. Also, because of inadequate communications and radar systems (and their vulnerability to ECM), and lack of doctrine and training, effective tactical air support of ground troops in combined arms operations would be difficult to achieve. Inadequate training applies as well to the army and navy, as spare parts, ammunition, and fuel are frequently difficult to obtain. Here is an area where an improved industrial base and economy, accompanied by an improved logistical system, could significantly enhance China's military readiness. In spite of the fact that the People's Liberation Army has the world's largest ground force, the second largest navy, and the third largest air force, these types of shortcomings raise questions about the ability of the PLA to carry out sustained military operations.

China also has problems with its ballistic missiles. Specifically, they are relatively primitive because they are liquid-fueled, they require several hours to erect, warm up, and aim. They must be drained of fuel after a limited period of time if not launched, and they are not easily mobile. They are extremely vulnerable to conventional or nuclear attack once preparations for launch begin, and this presents several problems for government and military leaders. If Chinese leaders become overly concerned with losing their missiles during a crisis before they even have a chance to use them, this could lead to the temptation on the leadership's part to strike first.

What are the PRC's Options now in Terms of the Nuclear Strategic Balance in the World?

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It has been reported that the Chinese have already developed a limited tactical nuclear capability and that they possess approximately 400 203-milimeter grids with 5 kiloton nuclear warheads, and about 700 152-milimeter guns with 1 kiloton nuclear warheads. In addition, of course, they also have a fleet of nuclear-capable bombers and fighter-bombers such as the TU-16, IL-28, and F-9 Fantan.

Some analysts see China as attempting to beef up its conventional forces with these ground and air tactical nuclear weapons in order to offer a "minimum deterrent" against a potential Soviet attack on northern China. There could be some merit to this since the Chinese have apparently been negotiating recently with the French for purchases of certain tactical nuclear weapon components. The primary advantages of following this course of action are that it would be much cheaper in the long run than making a big upgrade in pure conventional forces, and the increased military capability could be achieved in fairly short order.

Other analysts are quick to point out, however, that the PRC has made sacrifices to achieve expertise and hardware in the ICBM and nuclear submarine/SLBM sectors which indicates that it is not merely planning to rely on tactical nuclear weapons in the event of hostilities. They say that the strategic nuclear weapons program in China is alive and well and the Chinese are not going to abandon this program. The very fact that it has produced a nuclear-powered submarine, which will have SLBM capability, means that the PRC leadership is thinking of the survivability of its strategic force and, more importantly, its second strike capability.

The fact is that China is probably pursuing both the development of an improved tactical and strategic nuclear capability. Such a strategic doctrine, combining modern conventional and tactical nuclear forces backed up by strategic nuclear weapons, is likely to deter almost any Soviet attack on China short of an all-out nuclear war.

Military expenditures are now about 10 percent of GNP in China. With such a huge population and one of the lowest standards of living in the world, China would be ill-advised to increase military expenditures further. Recent reforms have done much to improve the Chinese military, but the PLA still lags far beyond its counterparts in the United States and the Soviet Union. Although expenditures on weapons systems have been astronomical for several years running, the industrial and technological gap with the US and USSR is just too great to be made up quickly. The process will take a considerable amount of time and sustained effort.

As inferred earlier, China has decided it must not allow itself to remain secluded and backward but must instead establish an environment which is conducive and favorable to international interaction. The Chinese leadership believes that progress in its development will come through an

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emphasis upon acquiring skills in advanced science and technology. This, they believe, should be the main driving force for China's modernization program. In the past 4-5 years, China has signed agreements with foreign countries on more than 3,000 projects for scientific and technological exchanges and cooperation. More than 50,000 foreign experts and scientists have been invited to visit China. Chinese scientists have joined more than 50 international scientific and technological organizations and academic bodies. Approximately 30,000 Chinese are now studying in foreign countries as students or visiting scholars.

IV. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

America and China have been discussing the possibilities of nuclear cooperation between the two countries since 1979 when relations were normalized. China was very interested in nuclear power to electrify its vast country and had initiated these discussions with the US and also with the West Europeans and Japan. The Chinese sought bidders and financing from those countries which already had highly developed nuclear electric programs. The US nuclear industry quickly seized upon this as an opportunity to breathe new life into its declining business. New orders for nuclear power plants had drastically fallen off in the years immediately preceding this. The French already seemed to have a leg up in negotiations with the PRC since they were attempting to come to agreement for the first power station which was expected to be built at Daya Bay near Hong Kong.

In 1981 the US formally presented a model nuclear cooperation agreement to the PRC for its consideration. Included in the draft was a provision requiring the PRC " to place any US-built nuclear power plants under international safeguards, a system of strict accounting procedures designed

to detect the diversion of nuclear material for weapons manufacture." The Chinese indignantly refused to agree to any such conditions, stating that this was an infringement on its sovereignty. The PRC pointed out that it had been a nuclear state since 1964, implying that it should not be treated as one of the small or medium-sized "outlaw states" which is attempting to obtain nuclear capability by any, and all, means whatsoever. It should be noted here that the PRC has steadfastly refused to sign the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, even though the Soviet Union and the US have already become signatories of that agreement.

In August 1982, Ambassador-at-Large Vernon A. Walters visited Peking with the purpose of attempting to persuade the Chinese leadership to agree to the acceptance of the safeguards. In the meantime, US intelligence sources reported that Chinese scientific delegations had been working at a centrifuge plan in Kahuta where Pakistani scientists were attempting to produce enriched uranium which can be used to trigger a nuclear detonation. There was also evidence that the Chinese had provided the Pakistanis with a design for a nuclear bomb in 1982 or 1983, and that they had shipped uranium to South Africa and "heavy water" to Argentina. Needless to say, the Walters mission, and other efforts to finalize an agreement on nuclear cooperation with the Chinese, were undercut by the angry reaction in the United States, especially in the US Congress, which eventually would have to ratify any treaty or agreement with the PRC. In early 1983, Secretary of State George P. Shultz traveled to Peking in another effort to convince the Chinese of the necessity for safeguards. He was unsuccessful and ended his visit by stating bluntly that the United States could never sign an agreement which did not contain the appropriate safeguards. After Shultz's trip, however, US officials began considering the possibility of dropping

the requirement for safeguards. Suddenly negotiations with the PRC on the matter of an agreement were reopened. In July 1983, the PRC announced that it would join the International Atomic Energy Agency; however, the PRC reaffirmed its belief that safeguards are not required on nuclear equipment sales between two nuclear-weapon states.

Secretary Shultz then appointed Richard T. Kennedy to take charge of negotiations with the Chinese. It is believed that Kennedy was convinced that the Chinese would never agree to inclusion of a written safeguards provision in the agreement on the principle of sovereignty. He therefore suggested to the Chinese that a verbal commitment to the principle behind the safeguards provision would be sufficient and that the agreement could then go forward for finalization. Then in early 1984, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang visited the US and, in a toast to President Reagan on friendship, peace and cooperation at a White House state dinner, stated the following:

"We are critical of the discriminatory treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, but we do not advocate or encourage nuclear proliferation. We do not engage in nuclear proliferation ourselves, nor do we help other countries develop nuclear weapons."

This statement greatly pleased US government officials who felt that this was a major concession on the part of the Chinese. Plans were made to finalize the written agreement and President Reagan, it was hoped, would have a major diplomatic breakthrough to hold up to the American public. Unfortunately, the Chinese refused to followup on Premier Zhao Ziyang's verbal statement with agreement on inclusion of a written proviso in the actual treaty. Richard Kennedy made one last-ditch, but fruitless, effort with the Chinese in the early spring of 1984. Then in April 1984, President Reagan himself traveled to Peking and, in a ceremony in Peking's Great Hall of the People, initialled the agreement. Unfortunately, even before the

President returned from China, there were fresh intelligence reports that the Chinese had once again been spotted at a secret nuclear facility in Pakistan. The reaction in the US Congress was strong and negative. The controversy raged over the next several months, and there seemed little hope that the Congress would ever ratify the treaty. Several leading Congressmen stated that verbal assurances regarding the safeguards were not acceptable and that written assurances were necessary before any more progress on the agreement could be expected.

During the next year, Kennedy continued his discussions with the Chinese in an effort to explain to them what the US meant by "safeguards." Finally he obtained new oral assurances from the PRC, and after returning with them to Washington, President Reagan signed the long-delayed nuclear accord during a visit of Chinese President Li Xiannian on July 23, 1985. This time the 30-year pact withstood the attacks of those hostile to it in the US Congress as the Senate passed favorably on it on November 21, 1985. It went into effect in December 1985 and establishes the legal framework to allow the US nuclear industry to bid for a share of China's estimated \$6 billion nuclear power plant construction program. A compromise with the Senate was worked out, however, which requires the President to certify to Congress that China has provided "additional information" proving it is not helping to spread nuclear weaponry, that US laws will be observed and that reprocessing approval is not guaranteed.

V. ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

The People's Republic of China under Deng Xiao-ping has embarked upon a new course and strategy in order to take what it believes to be its rightful place as the third great "superpower" on earth. No longer is it solely

looking inward and focusing all of its energies on building communism, while keeping its back turned to events taking place elsewhere in the world. It has recognized that to become a great power, and to do it in as short a time as possible, it must interact with the West, and especially with the United States. It is now doing so with a single-mindedness of purpose and conviction which ought to cause concern to many in the West, as well as to those in power in the Soviet Union.

Does the PRC Pose a Threat to the Soviet Union?

As far as the military balance is concerned, there is no question that the PRC is still a long way off from the point at which it might be able to make the USSR back down in a direct confrontation. The USSR has an overwhelming superiority over the PRC in both nuclear weapons and quality of conventional forces. Soviet strategic and tactical nuclear weapons vastly outnumber any that the PRC now has, and, what is more, the quality of Soviet weapons is superior. Soviet delivery systems are far greater in number and variety, as well as sophistication. The technology gap between the two countries in this regard is still great. As far as conventional forces are concerned, there is no question that the PRC has the edge in sheer numbers, however, Soviet troops are well disciplined, well trained, and much better equipped than their neighbors to the south. It seems, then, that the PRC would, in realistic terms, pose no threat militarily to the USSR in either nuclear or conventional warfare terms. To be sure, the PRC could cause a nuisance to the USSR in many ways were hostilities to occur between the two, but as things now stand, it can be safely stated that this is a minor concern of the Soviet leadership.

The leadership of the PRC is well aware of this disparity and, as stated earlier, the threat which the "Russian bear" poses to the PRC is one of the

primary motivating factors behind the PRC's urgent wish to improve its military capability. At present, the PRC is susceptible to military pressure from the Soviets, and Soviet moves in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia cannot help but cause grave concern in Peking. On the other hand, it is doubtful that the USSR can envision attacking the PRC. A conventional war with the Chinese would be a long and costly one because the Chinese have the advantage in numbers of personnel. It is also unlikely that the Soviets can foresee a situation in which it would have to use nuclear weapons against the PRC. It is, after all, quite doubtful that the PRC will soon be in a position to be able to truly threaten the territories and in tutions of the USSR. Besides the fact that the PRC is a comradely communist state (the largest on earth in terms of population), the Soviets certainly would not want a quarrel with the Chinese to get it tied down in the East thereby leaving the "western front" vulnerable to attack by the United States and its European allies. Furthermore, the USSR and the PRC still have much in common. They are the two largest communist nations in the world, and the Soviets definitely would not want to seriously or irreparably alienate the PRC to the point where the PRC might consider shedding communism altogether.

Will there be any reaction, then, on the part of the Soviet Union to the changes taking place in the PRC today, or in response to the PRC's increasing military potential? Probably not. The USSR most likely will continue to let the PRC do as it will with regard to the changing focus of its economy and the development of its armed forces. It is doubtful, in any case, that the Soviets could influence the Chinese one way or the other, even with military force (a'la Czechoslovakia or Hungary) unless they would be willing to use the ultimate weapon. So why not sit back and observe from a distance? Is it not to the USSR's advantage to have a strong China? Yes

and no. Yes, in the sense that two strong communist states can do more to advance and promote communism throughout the world than one state acting alone can do. For example, if countries in the Third World do not like the Soviet style or model, they have an alternative in the PRC. In the propaganda wars, the Soviets can always point to the fact that communism does, in fact, work successfully and that it is thriving in two great powers with radically different racial, cultural and political heritage.

On the other hand, a strong China, over time, definitely will become a formidable rival of the Soviet Union in all spheres. Most likely the Soviets recognize the fact that the Chinese will eventually become a bothersome and potentially dangerous competitor, but this is not now the case. It would seem, then, that the Soviets are prepared to wait and cross that bridge when they come to it. There is also the consideration that the Soviets are obsessed with the threat from the west and do not yet fully recognize or appreciate the potential danger which the PRC will most likely present in the near future.

What About the US?

It is interesting to observe the evolving relationship between the PRC and the US, and to speculate on where it all might end. First, it should be pointed out early that it is also in the interest of the United States that the PRC become an influential and powerful player in the world political and economic arenas. It is certain that recent US administrations have wished to see a stronger China emerge on the scene, but not too strong. In other words, the US would not desire to see a China so strong that it could become a serious adversary in world affairs and able to back up its actions with potent military force.

Why would the US want to see a strong China? First, a strong China would be an effective counterforce to the Soviet Union in Asian affairs. At present, the US is doing all it can to keep the Soviets in check throughout Asia. The task is a formidable one and US resources are being put to the test to maintain the status quo throughout Asia. The Korean Peninsula, instability in Southeast Asia caused by Vietnam, Afghanistan and the Indian Ocean are all areas causing concern in Washington. China has a long-standing and natural interest in all of these areas. They would be only too happy to see Soviet presence and influence disappear from these areas altogether, leaving the PRC as the dominant force in these strategically important regions of the world. The US would like nothing better than to see this rivalry between the USSR and the PRC intensify.

Second, it is widely believed that political tensions in many of the peripheral countries (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, and Pakistan) would lessen considerably if the USSR were not left with such a free hand to instigate problems. Third, the USSR would be forced to devote a large proportion of its military resources and attention to protecting its southern flank if China were to develop into a truly serious competitor. This could have considerable effect upon the USSR's ability to threaten Western Europe and could thus have a stabilizing effect by reducing tensions among our West European allies.

Fourth, there is no question that there is an economic motive behind the US's desire to see the PRC continue to pursue the path it is now travelling. A China which is hungry to develop its industrial and economic infrastructure will have to buy technology and equipment from the West. There is also the prospect that the vast consumer market in China will one day be opened to imports of Western goods. The United States is, of course,

literally chomping at the bit for this to occur in order to help bolster the US economy. Some have even argued that this is the primary motivation behind the United States' desire for closer relations with the Chinese. Certainly it is an important factor, but the other considerations cited above are equally, if not more, important.

This is all well summed up in a recent statement by former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

America has a major stake in China's success. A strong and independent China is in America's interest not because it will be easy to deal with—quite the contrary—but because the threats to its security will for the foreseeable future come from countries the United States too considers threats to global security. In this sense, the modernization of China serves American interests—not as an American card against the Soviet Union, but becasue in maintaining its own security for its own purposes, China contributes to the global equilibrium.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE US POLICY

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The United States must be cautious in its growing relationship with the PRC. The US administration must not allow itself to be taken in by the notion that there is some hope that the PRC will one day throw off the cloak of communism, change its fundamental philosophy, and suddenly embrace the West. The PRC is not making liberal-sounding noises and taking radical (from the USSR's point of view) actions with regard to trade, investment and other capitalist-type economic reforms because the leadership woke up suddenly one day and realized that communism should be tossed out in favor of democracy. There is no feeling in China today that the existing basic system is ineffective and needs changing. Not at all. The Chinese simply realize that it will take them too long to reach their objectives if they continue to try to do it on their own. They know that the Soviet Union

cannot, and/or perhaps will not, provide them the support and expertise necessary to build up the PRC's military and economy to the desired levels. The Chinese want to become a thriving and formidable country which will be a force to be reckoned with in regional and world affairs. Only the West can provide the PRC with the capital, the expertise, and the technology necessary to accomplish that.

While all of this obviously has certain benefits for the US, it also presents some risks as well. For instance, suppose that Deng Xiao-ping, and the other Chinese leaders, have master-minded a complex scheme to dupe the United States into believing that political and economic reform is possible in China, while all the time only planning to take what the West has to offer in technology and capital in order to close the technology and weapons gap. Once this has been acquired, the PRC might possibly become an even more obstinate and difficult rival of the US than the current Soviet regime. The West would be faced with two dangerous opponents were the Soviet Union and the PRC ever to reach an accommodation in an intensified effort to extend communist influence throughout the world. An analogy can be made here with the old tale of the vampire who lures his intended victim into the trap with seductive methods and then bleeds him dry.

When one looks at the record and at recent history, it certainly is not comforting in this regard. The PRC has infused massive amounts of money and energy into the development of its weapons capability. It has refused to agree in writing that it will not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Indeed, there is even evidence that it has already assisted Pakistan, and others, in their pursuit of nuclear capability. The PRC has also launched a vigorous weapons sales promotion campaign. Today China is among the world's ten largest arms exporters, and its sales of weapons to

Third World countries are earning it more than \$1 billion annually. 9

There is, then, some basis for questioning the PRC's ultimate objectives.

Certainly, the US ought to proceed slowly and deliberately in its dealings on all fronts with the Chinese. While some technology can be safely traded or sold to the PRC, there is some technology which has both civilian and military applications which should not be permitted to fall into Chinese hands. The United States should continue to use the National Security Council and the Paris-based Coordinating Committee for Multi-Lateral Export Controls (CCOM) to monitor and approve technology transfers to the PRC. Private business entrepreneurs should not be permitted to push the administration too far and too fast in this sensitive area. A closer relationship with the PRC should be encouraged, but the US must be careful to ensure that the costs in the long run do not outweigh any short term advantages. Above all, the United States cannot let itself be lured by the prospect of huge dollar profits on the economic front, while leaving itself blind to the possibility that the Chinese leadership is merely playing a crafty and deceptive game which could place the US at some future political/military disadvantage.

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